

# Northgate Now

## The Vision

Northgate’s future is a vital urban center with a core of new jobs, housing, open spaces and valued public places, surrounded by healthy single-family neighborhoods.

The suburban, low-density auto-oriented landscape is now being transformed into a more walkable, bikeable, transit-oriented place where people live, work, shop and play. Realizing this vision requires transforming land uses and transportation choices. Understanding Northgate’s history helps us appreciate Northgate right now—and its exciting future.



**1870's**

David Denny's cabin in the Northgate area.

**1890's**

The Seattle-Everett Interurban Line.



The Northgate Mall's Totem Pole

## The History

When the first settlers came to this north Seattle region, they found a dense forest dotted by small lakes and marshes and drained by streams. The Suquamish had long hunted and fished throughout the Northgate area and gathered cranberries in its bogs. David Denny, one of Seattle’s original settlers, was the first to build just north of Seattle in 1870. Much of the land was cleared of its hemlock and fir trees in order to rebuild Seattle after the Great Fire of 1889. The Seattle-Everett Interurban Line of electric trolleys, started in the 1890’s, soon brought new residents beyond the city limits just north of 85th Street. For the next 50 years, Northgate developed slowly into a rural community where cows and sheep grazed.

## Big Changes

On April 21, 1950, Northgate Mall opened—billed as the largest shopping center in the nation. Northgate Mall realized the vision of postwar prosperity. On opening day there were 18 stores and the 2,500-car parking lot was completely filled.



NORTH GATE BON MARCHE - SEATTLE - W.N.

1950

**1950** Northgate opens. Its architect, John “Jack” Graham Jr., also designed the Space Needle.



**1965**

Interstate 5 was completed making it easier to drive between Northgate and other Puget Sound destinations. This ignited apartment and office development in the Northgate area. The mall soon added 25 stores, a movie theater and Northgate Hospital. By 1968, the Northgate area handled more than 50,000 car trips a day.

**1970**

Blue Streak, the first express Park & Ride bus service in the region, begins between Northgate and downtown Seattle.



**1974**

Women explore fashions at the enclosed mall.

